



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
2127 SE Marine Science Drive  
Newport, Oregon 97365-5258



## **Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge Tidal Wetlands Restoration Project**

**Scoping Mailing Date: November 5, 2008**

### **Greetings**

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service), Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has initiated the review and planning effort for restoring historic tidal wetland habitat. The primary objective of this planning effort is to determine what methods, if any, will be used to implement habitat improvements that will restore tidal wetland habitats and functions for estuarine-dependent fish and wildlife. As part of this planning effort, the Refuge, in cooperation with FHWA, will be developing an Environmental Assessment (EA) over the winter of 2008/2009.

Restoration of the tidal wetlands would likely increase the flooding on North Bank Lane, and, therefore, necessitate work be done to prevent such flooding. The FHWA has been developing a design to address current periodic flooding and safety concerns associated with North Bank Lane. Given that the restoration effort requires roadway work on North Bank Lane, and to ensure that the proposed roadway work is consistent with the restoration efforts, the Refuge and FHWA agreed to address both of these efforts as one project in the EA.

The purpose of the EA is to identify and describe alternatives designed to restore the tidal wetland habitat, evaluate the environmental effects of these alternatives and determine whether these alternatives result in any significant effects to the human environment.

The Refuge and FHWA are seeking input from the public, interested agencies, Tribes, and organizations regarding their interests, concerns, and viewpoints about this project. This is the second scoping effort to keep you informed and invite your participation regarding the project. A public scoping meeting covering the work on North Bank Lane was held on 13 May 2008 at the Bandon Public Library. Input from that meeting and this scoping effort will be incorporated in the EA. Thank you for your involvement.

### **Background and Location**

The project area is a historic tidal wetland in the lower Coquille River watershed, which was diked and drained for agricultural purposes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Ni-les'tun Unit of Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge was acquired by the Service between 2000 and 2004 and is located along the northern edge of the

Coquille River, east of U.S. Highway 101 and south of North Bank Lane in Coos County. The purposes for establishing this Unit are to restore tidal wetlands for anadromous fish and migratory birds, and to provide wildlife-dependant public use opportunities. The proposed project seeks to meet the purposes for which the Unit was established by restoring full tidal wetlands values and functions on approximately 430 acres.

From 2003 to 2008, the Refuge and the FHWA has conducted a series of habitat, hydrological, topographic, and cultural investigations to document the current status of archeological sites, topography, waters, soils, plants, fish, and wildlife that occur within the Refuge and the adjacent roads. This information, together with knowledge and guidance from the local residents, restoration biologists, road construction experts, Tribes and numerous other groups and organizations is being used to develop a comprehensive planning effort for the restoration of the lower Coquille River watershed at Bandon Marsh.

Since restoration and recovery of degraded natural habitats often requires long periods of time, the project implementation is expected to occur over several years. It is anticipated that the interior wetland restoration work and construction of the roadway project will most likely begin in late summer of 2009 or early spring 2010 and is expected to last 1 to 2 construction seasons. The major portion of the restoration and reconstruction effort of the habitat and road is expected to occur from 2009 to 2011 with ongoing minor efforts in the following years.

The proposed project has been coordinated with and /or is supported by the Coos County Commissioners, City of Bandon, Port of Bandon, Oregon Tourism Commission, Bandon Chamber of Commerce, Bandon Dunes Golf Resort (owner of two adjacent properties), Ducks Unlimited, Coquille Indian Tribe, Wetlands Conservancy, and a broad range of conservation organizations working under the umbrella of the Oregon Habitat Joint Venture.

### **Your Involvement is welcome**

Persons seeking more detailed information on this preliminary proposal should contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge at 541-347-1470. Written comments on the preliminary planning effort should be sent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2127 SE Marine Science Drive, Newport, OR 97365 or by email to [oregoncoast@fws.gov](mailto:oregoncoast@fws.gov). We request comments be received by **December 5, 2008**. The Draft Environmental Assessment is scheduled to be available in late winter or early spring 2009 for public review and comment.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).